

Subject: Fish Hatchery Review

Background: The ultimate goal of ecosystem restoration should be self-sustaining populations of organisms, at levels that provide a buffer against the risk of extinction. While fish hatchery production may be needed to rescue dwindling stocks at very low population levels, and while production hatcheries may be deemed necessary to support fisheries while restoration is occurring, the potential adverse impacts of hatcheries on wild stocks must be reasonably balanced against their benefits.

Proposed Action: Complete a comprehensive review of current hatchery goals and operations, with a focus on their impact on wild stocks. The review should encompass the goals, operation plans, objectives, potential sunset clauses, release protocols, release timing, release location, efforts to protect genetic integrity of different stocks, identification of fish stocks, and modification of operations to prevent straying and stranding. In addition, short-term actions to reduce the adverse impacts of hatcheries should be developed. The review shall encompass both salmon and steelhead stocks.

Geographic Area: The review should include the five major anadromous hatcheries on the American, Merced, Mokelumne, Sacramento, and Feather Rivers.

Recommended Funding: \$250,000

Coordination: CDFG, Genetic Review Committee, NMFS, NFWF, hatchery owners and operators, PCFFA.

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HATCHERY.WPD